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# Visit of Imperial Japanese Mission to Washington's Tomb

## ADDRESSES

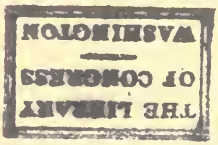
DELIVERED AT MOUNT VERNON ON AUGUST 26, 1917
DURING A VISIT OF THE JAPANESE WAR MISSION
TO THE TOMB OF WASHINGTON

BY

HON. JOSEPHUS DANIELS
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

AND

VISCOUNT ISHII
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND
PLENIPOTENTIARY

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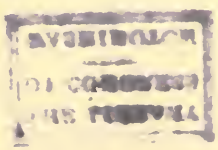

SPEECH OF SECRETARY DANIELS AT THE TOMB OF WASHINGTON ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF THE JAPANESE MISSION TO MOUNT VERNON, AUGUST 26, 1917.

It is not inappropriate, but I think has an historical significance, that in this pilgrimage of our distinguished visitors from Japan to the American Mecca they have come upon a ship of the Navy and as guests of the Navy Department. The men of the Navy love to recall that when in the early fifties it was determined to send a mission to Japan to open the way for that intercourse which has been mutually so agreeable and helpful, the diplomatic duty was intrusted to a distinguished naval officer, Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry, who had won fame ashore and afloat. To the courage of a naval officer he added the accomplishments of a diplomat, illustrating again how deserved was the praise of Lord Palmerston, who said:

> Whenever I want a thing well done in a distant part of the world, when I want a man with a good head, a good heart, lots of pluck, and plenty of common sense, I always send for a captain in the Navy.

Commodore Perry was the first to win the confidence of the Japanese people and Japanese rulers. He lived before this day of hurried calls, remained in Japan nearly three years, and had time to learn the worth of the Japanese and to study their customs and traditions. He remained long enough, too, for the people of Japan to learn from him and his fellow officers, sailors, and marines the broad and fraternal spirit of the American people who did not ask then, have not asked since, and will never ask for themselves any right or privilege that may not likewise be freely granted to the smallest nation.

In 1855 the Perry treaty was ratified and Japan and the United States formed a friendship which, cemented by the treaty negotiated for us by Townsend Harris, has bound together with hooks of steel the peoples of these two great Nations. July 4 was established forever as a holy day of patriotism for the United States by the victories of George Washington. Independence Day has also a place in Japan's calendar, for it was on July 4, 1859, that the treaty providing for commerce between the United States and Japan became effective. Thus the American and Japanese diplomats strengthened and enlarged the treaty secured by Commodore Perry.

America opens its hearts and homes to the distinguished members of the Japanese Mission, and with a peculiar sense of fitness in the present crisis we welcome you to the shrine of George Washington, the patron saint of America, who illustrated those virtues of valor and statesmanship which attract men of like mold of every clime and every nation.

To-day, with stronger ties than ever, woven out of the threads of our mutual participation in the world-wide struggle to insure to all mankind the right to live their own lives and pursue their own national ideals, Japan and America pause at the tomb of Washington, in the hope that there may fall upon us all a double portion of his spirit of faith in the triumph of the right and his readiness to

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make the supreme sacrifice for the principles for which America, Japan, and their allies are now contending in the arena of war. They have drawn the sword to end military feudalism. They will sheathe it only in a victory that will guarantee permanent peace. We will follow in the present war the admonition of Gen. Washington, who, bequeathing to his nephew his swords, which now hang in his home at Mount Vernon, gave this counsel:

"These swords are accompanied with an injunction not to unsheathe them for the purpose of shedding blood except it be for self-defense, or in defense of their country and its rights; and in the latter case to keep them unsheathed, and prefer falling with them in their hands to the relinquishment thereof."

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## SPEECH OF VISCOUNT ISHII, HEAD OF THE JAPANESE MISSION, AT WASHINGTON'S TOMB, MOUNT VERNON, AUGUST 26, 1917.

In the name of my gracious sovereign, the Emperor of Japan, and representing all the liberty-loving people who own his sway, I stand to-day in this sacred presence, not to eulogize the name of Washington, for that were presumptuous, but to offer the simple tribute of a people's reverence and love.

Washington was an American, but America, great as she is, powerful as she is, certain as she is of her splendid destiny, can lay no exclusive claim to this immortal name. Washington is now a citizen of the world; to-day he belongs to all mankind. And so men come here from the ends of the earth to honor his memory and to reiterate their faith in the principles to which his great life was devoted.

Japan claims entrance to this holy circle. She yields to none in reverence and respect; nor is there any gulf between the ancient East and the new-born West too deep and wide for the hearts and the understandings of her people to cross.

It is fitting then that men who love liberty and justice better than they love life, that men who know what honor is, should seek this shrine and here, in the presence of these sacred ashes, re-dedicate themselves to the service of humanity.

It is a fitting place, at this time, when all the world is filled with turmoil and suffering, for comrades in a holy cause to gather and here renew their fealty to a righteous purpose, firm in the determination that the struggle must go on until the world is free from menace and aggression.

Japan is proud to place herself beside her noble allies in this high resolve and here, in the presence of these deathless ashes, she reaffirms her devotion to the cause and the principle for which they wage battle, fully determined to do her whole part in securing for the world the blessings of liberty, justice, and lasting peace.

As the representative of my people, then, I place this wreath upon the tomb of Washington with reverent hands; and in so doing, it is my proud privilege to again pledge my country to those principles of right and justice which have given immortality to the name of Washington.

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